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DRAFT REPORT

Addendum

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PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

Programme 5. Policy coordination and sustainable development

1. At its 23rd and 24th meetings, on 18 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 5, Policy coordination and sustainable development, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

Discussion

2. Many delegations expressed the view that the programme was consistent with existing mandates. Other delegations were of the view that the presentation of the programme did not adequately reflect the role that the United Nations plays in the field of development. Several delegations expressed the view that the programme should duly reflect the integrated approach as contained in Agenda 21.

3. A number of delegations considered that the objectives were too general and should have been defined more precisely so that they could be measured at the end of the plan period.

4. Some delegations were of the view that the role of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development with regard to the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its link with the Economic and Social Council should have been highlighted in the programme. Other delegations

expressed concern that there was no reference to cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions.

5. Several delegations noted the absence of references to countries with economies in transition and the least developed countries in the narrative of the programme.

6. A number of delegations noted that references were made to "civil society", "non-state actors", and "new global actors" and expressed the view that, while seeking their involvement could be a positive development, it should be considered only as a complement to the role of Governments.

7. A number of delegations recalled the observation of the Commission on Sustainable Development that small island developing States are among the most environmentally vulnerable. They also underscored the need for special priority to be accorded the situation and needs of those countries, including through access to grants and other concessional resources, and called for the provision of adequate human and financial resources to be allocated to the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development to facilitate the effective follow-up to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

8. One delegation indicated that it did not agree with the structure and the narrative proposed for the programme. That delegation considered that the new structure should consist of three programmes, as follows:

(a) A programme entitled "Overall issues and policies, including coordination", which would include the subprogrammes of the current programme 11;

(b) A programme entitled "Global social issues and policies", which would include two subprogrammes: subprogramme 1, Advancement of women, and subprogramme 2, Social development and integration;

(c) A programme entitled "Sustainable development".

9. One delegation indicated that the responsibility of sustained economic growth and sustainable development should not be limited to the Commission on Sustainable Development, and that other relevant bodies, including the United Nations Environment Programme, should be involved.

10. One delegation proposed replacing the words "to monitor" with the words "to follow up", in paragraphs 5.7 (a) and 5.11 (c), and to replace the words "To improve the monitoring" with the words "To improve the follow-up", in paragraph 5.7 (b).

Conclusions and recommendations

11. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 5 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 5.3:

(i) In the first sentence, replace the words "to develop agreed standards, policies and programmes on issues arising from globalization of environmental and social problems and from the marginalization of certain disadvantaged groups" by the words "to promote an effective exchange of information and to provide follow-up to agreed standards, policies and programmes that emerge from intergovernmental decisions";

(ii) In the second sentence, delete the words "new global actors, for example";

(b) Paragraph 5.4 (e):

(i) Replace the word "Strengthened" by the word "Facilitated";

(ii) Add the words "that emerge from intergovernmental decisions" after the words "civil society";

(iii) Replace the word "including" by the word "especially";

(c) Paragraph 5.5 (c): Replace the paragraph with the following text:

"To increase the Organization's capacity to serve as a focal point for the non-governmental organizations with consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and to improve coordination of non-governmental organization activities, in accordance with the procedures of the United Nations, so as to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity; and to enhance opportunities to facilitate participation of relevant elements of civil society in the activities of intergovernmental bodies, in accordance with the decisions of those bodies";

(d) Paragraph 5.5 (d):

(i) In the first sentence, replace the word "reform" by the word "restructuring";

(ii) Add the words "as may be appropriate" at the end of the paragraph;

(e) Paragraph 5.5 (e): After the words "central intergovernmental bodies and" add the words "to promote the implementation of the decisions taken by";

(f) Paragraph 5.7 (c):

(i) Add a reference to coordination and follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action;

(ii) Add a reference to coordination with the Centre for Human Rights and its relevant mechanisms such as the Special Rapporteur on violence against women;

(g) Paragraph 5.7 (e): Add a reference to Governments;

(h) Paragraph 5.9 (a): Replace the first sentence by the following text: "To promote the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action";

(i) Paragraph 5.9 (b):

(i) Add the words "the International Year of the Family (1994)" after the words "the Year 2000 and Beyond";

(ii) In the last sentence, add the words "as well as families" after the word "groups";

(j) Paragraph 5.9 (c): Replace the paragraph with the following text:

"To strengthen participation and cooperation among all actors concerned with social development, as well as promotion of actions addressed to accomplish the priorities of national programmes and internationally agreed norms";

(k) Paragraph 5.9: Add a new subparagraph, to read as follows:

"(d) The Department will draw upon the decision taken by the Commission for Social Development regarding the multi-year programme of work on the follow-up to the Social Summit";

(l) Paragraph 5.10: At the end of the paragraph, delete the words "and will increase interaction to that end with actors of civil society";

(m) Insert a new paragraph 5.11, reading as follows:

"The implementation of these activities would be done without prejudice to the role of the Secretariat as stated in other relevant programmes of the medium-term plan dealing with environment";

(n) Old paragraph 5.11 (b):

(i) In the first sentence, delete the words "for instance, consumption and production patterns as an umbrella concept encompassing environmental and economic factors";

(ii) The third sentence should be a separate subparagraph (c) and the remaining subparagraphs relettered accordingly;

(o) Old paragraph 5.11 (d): In the first sentence, after the word "implementing", add the words "the economic, social and environmental aspects of";

(p) Old paragraph 5.11: Add a new subparagraph, to read as follows:

"(f) In its work programme, the Division will give the necessary attention to the economic and social dimensions of sustainability. It will also draw up specific programmes as follow-up to the decisions taken in Agenda 21 and the Commission on Sustainable Development regarding the provision of adequate and predictable new and additional financial resources to developing countries, and mechanisms for the transfer of technology to those countries, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed in paragraph 34.14 (b) of Agenda 21".